

WISCONSIN ENDANGERED RESOURCES REPORT # 132
STATUS OF THE TIMBER WOLF IN WISCONSIN
PERFORMANCE REPORT 1 JULY 2004 THROUGH 30 JUNE 2005
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SUMMARY

This report covers activities conducted from 1 July 2004 through 30 June 2005, on wolf conservation in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin DNR reclassified wolves from endangered to threatened in 1999, and delisted wolves to protected wild animals on August 1, 2004. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service downlisted wolves to threatened on 1 April 2003, and although work was started to completely delist wolves in 2004, a federal district court ruling in Oregon on 31 January 2005 caused Wisconsin wolves to be re-listed as endangered. The 1999 Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan determined wolf management in the state, and this report follows the outline of the wolf plan to describe wolf management activities.

Thirty-one wolves were live-captured, and 22 were fitted with radio collars in 2004 in 18 different packs. Sixty-four radio tagged wolves were monitored during the study period. Mean territory size was 37 square miles for 27 adult wolves. The minimum count for the wolf population in winter 2004-2005 was 425 to 455 wolves in 108 packs, and included 414 - 442 wolves outside of Indian reservations. Eleven wolves being actively monitored died during the period from the following mortality factors: 3 from disease, 1 other wolves, 4 shot, 1 trapped/snared, 1 vehicle collision, 1 euthanized at depredation site. A total of 48 wolves were found dead in Wisconsin and included death from the following: 5 disease, 1 other wolves, 7 shot & snared, 9 vehicle collisions, 22 euthanized at depredation sites, and 3 unknown. Mange caused most mortality from disease and was detected on 8 of 28 wolves handled in 2004. Reports of wolf observations were received from 44 Wisconsin Counties. Forty-three cases of wolf depredation on domestic animals occurred during the study period, and included death of 31 cattle, 7 sheep, 2 horses, 15 dogs, plus 1 calf and 2 dogs were injured. Twenty-four wolves were live-trapped from 12 farms, and 20 were euthanized, plus nonlethal methods were used on many farms. Various other strategies for implementing the 1999 Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan were also conducted during the period.

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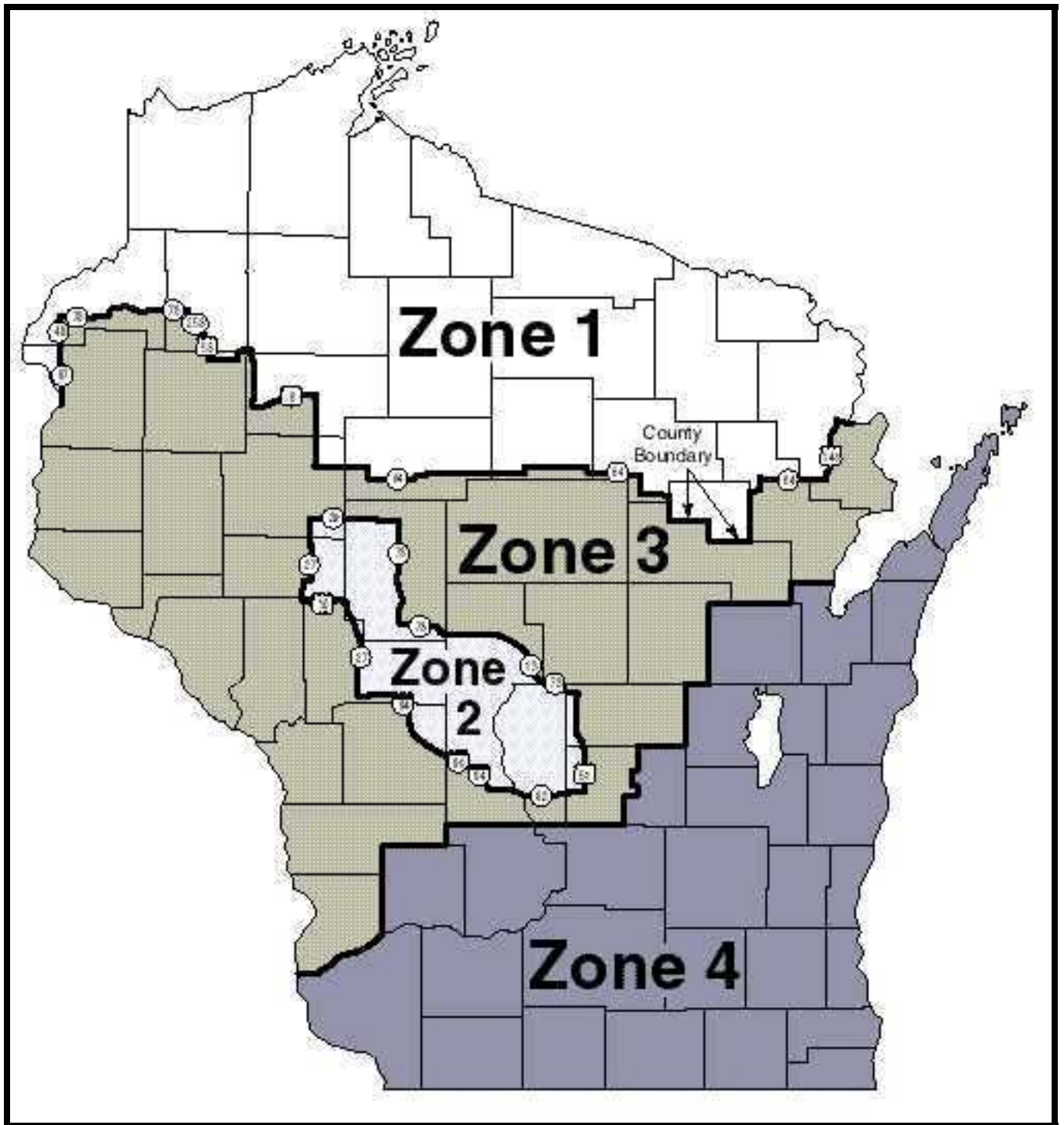


Figure 1. *Wisconsin Wolf Management Zones as established by the 1999 State Wolf Management Plan.*

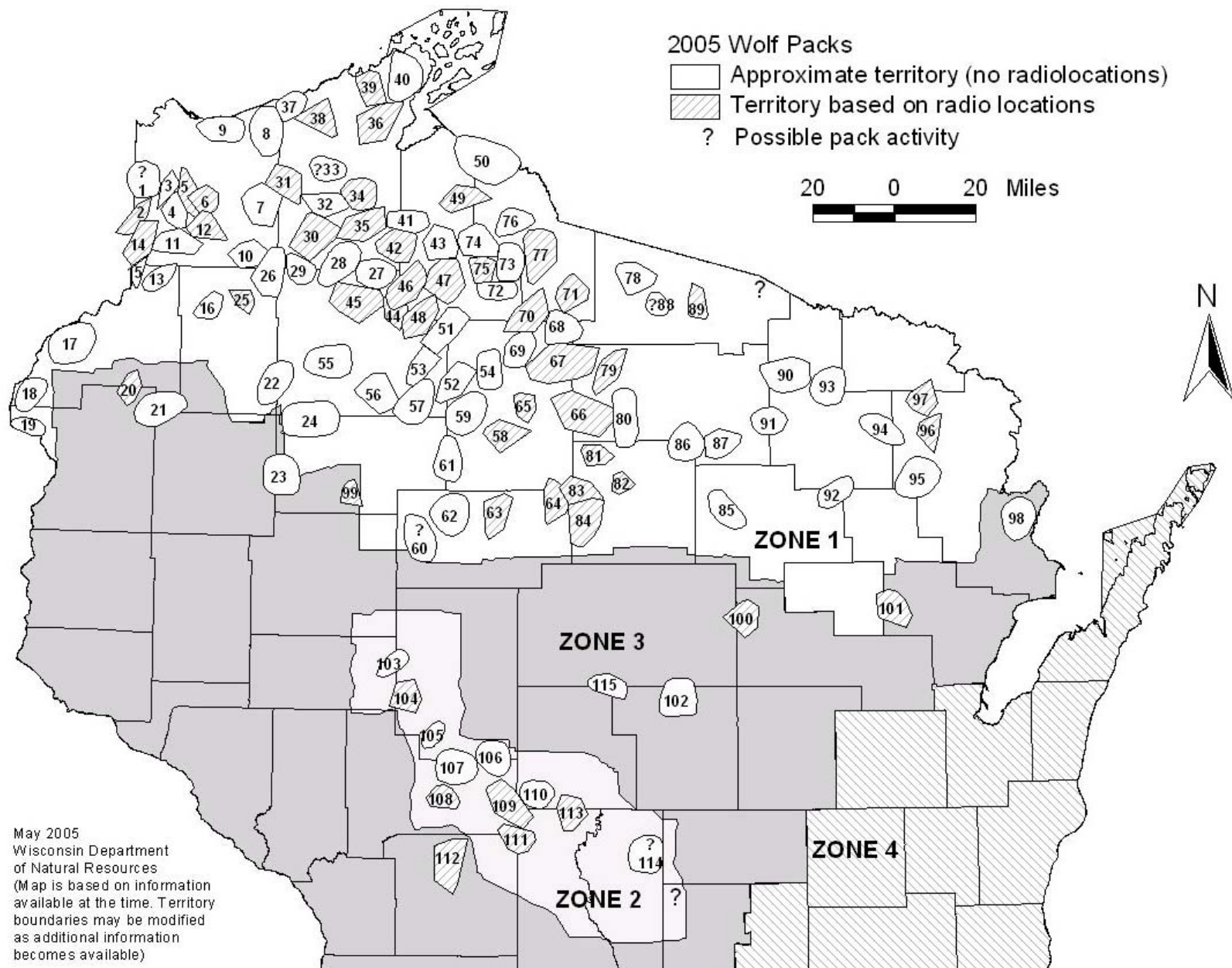


Figure 2. Gray Wolf Distribution in Wisconsin: Winter 2004-2005 (Refer to Tables 3 & 10)

Figure 3. *Changes in Wisconsin Gray Wolf Population: 1980-2005*

